

**Amendment to the Claims**

Please replace all prior versions of the claims with the listing of claims included herewith:

1-32. (Canceled).

33. (Currently Amended) A method employed in discriminating an action performed by a human from automatic computerized action, the method comprising:

presenting a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability challenge having distorted content that reduces the possibility of automated computerized identification of the content performed by an automated computerized operation and increases the possibility of a human response, wherein the response component is not based on a pre-selected content item chosen by a user, the presenting including:

generating the response component using original content; and

distorting the original content of the response component to

generate the distorted content;

electronically receiving a human response to the human ability challenge; and

comparing the received response to the original content of the response component to thereby help determine whether the received response was provided by a human.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~35~~ 33, wherein the step of generating the response component comprises randomly generating the original content of the

response component.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~35~~ 33, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted visual representation of the response component.

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~35~~ 33, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted audio representation of the response component.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising selecting a type of human ability challenge from a plurality of human ability challenge types.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises randomly selecting the type of human ability challenge.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, comprising determining the respondent's identity, and wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises selecting the type of human ability challenge based on the respondent's identity.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, comprising generating the response component based upon the type of human ability challenge selected.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Canceled)

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising providing a request for authentication for gaining access to a computerized resource, receiving an authentication code, and verifying the code responsive to the request for

authentication if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising receiving a request for access to a computerized resource and providing access to the resource only if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, comprising requesting user confirmation of an action and accepting user confirmation only if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting one or more graphical images representing the response component.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a plurality of graphical images representing identifiable objects and presenting a cognitive question regarding the plurality of graphical images, wherein the response component represents an answer to the question.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting an audio file reciting a question, wherein the response component represents an answer to the question.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a noisy textual image displaying the response component.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of

presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a natural language question, wherein the response component represents an answer to the natural language question.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting the human ability challenge comprises transmitting the human ability challenge from a server to a client.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, comprising encrypting the response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the encrypted response component.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54, wherein the step of comparing comprises decrypting the encrypted response component and comparing the decrypted response component to the received response.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein the step of receiving a response to the human ability challenge comprises transmitting the response from the client to the server.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, comprising hashing the response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the hashed response component.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the step of comparing comprises hashing the received response and comparing the hashed received response to the hashed response component.

59. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer readable program code functions embedded in said medium for causing a computer to discriminate an action performed by a human from

automatic computerized action, the computer program product comprising:

a first computer readable program code function that causes the computer to present a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability challenge having distorted content that reduces the possibility of automated computerized identification of the content performed by an automated computerized operation and increases the possibility of a human response, wherein the response component is not based on a pre-selected content item chosen by a user, the computer further operative, in presenting the human ability challenge, to:

generate the response component using original content; and  
distort the original content of the response component to generate the  
distorted content;

a second computer readable program code function that causes the computer to electronically receive a human response to the human ability challenge; and

a third computer readable program code function that causes the computer to compare the received response to the original content of the response component to thereby help determine whether the received response was provided by a human.

60. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 59, wherein the first computer readable program code function resides on a server and the second computer readable program code function resides on a client connectable to the server.

61. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 60, wherein the server comprises a proxy server positioned between an application server and the

client.

62. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 60, wherein the server comprises an application server.

63. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 59, wherein the first, second and third sets of computer program instructions reside on a single computer.

64. (Currently Amended) In an on-line system, a method for reducing automated access, the method comprising:

allowing on-line access to data;

presenting a human ability challenge using an output device in response to a request for access to data, the human ability challenge having distorted content that reduces the possibility of automated computerized identification of the content performed by an automated computerized operation and increases the possibility of a human response, wherein the response component is not based on a pre-selected content item chosen by a user, the presenting including:

generating the response component using original content; and

distorting the original content of the response component to generate

the distorted content;

electronically receiving a human response to the human ability challenge;

and

verifying that the response satisfies the human ability challenge before allowing access to data by comparing the received response to the original content of the response component.